

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SD Guardsman earns highest honor at leadership school

McGHEE TYSON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Tenn. – A member of the South Dakota National Guard's 82nd Civil Support Team, based out of Ellsworth Air Force Base earned the highest award presented to graduates of the Noncommissioned Officer Academy, at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Tennessee, April 8.

The John Levitow Award was presented to Tech. Sgt. Dustin Clement, for achieving the highest overall score based on his academics, performance evaluations and instructor, peer review leadership points. In addition, Clement is a recipient of the Distinguished Graduate Award presented to the top 10 percent of the class.

The award is in honor of John Levitow, the lowest ranking Airman to earn the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during a flying mission over Long Binh, South Vietnam Feb. 24, 1969.

"I was shocked but at the same time it was a good feeling to know that all my hard work paid off," said Clement. "As a Guardsman who grew up in a small South Dakota town [Faulkton], I am proud to win this national award."

Clement scored 100 percent on the summative exam, the end of course exam, and was told by his instructor that receiving a perfect score is rarely accomplished.

"One of the Air Force core values is excellence in all we do," said Clement. "I just wanted to do my best and learn as much as could to improve my leadership skills."

The NCO Academy is a six-week course that further builds upon the leadership skills needed as Airmen progress to mid-career status as noncommissioned officers.

"I learned from my classmates, who have a lot of experience in managing Airmen on a daily basis. I hope we will all keep in contact throughout my career so we can help mentor each other," said Clement.

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150408-Z-ZZ999-001: Retired Chief Master Sgt. Richard Moon, the fifth senior enlisted leader for the director of the Air National Guard, left, Col. Jessica Meyeraan, TEC commander and Senior Master Sgt. Christine Shawhan, TEC interim commandant, right, present Tech. Sgt. Dustin Clement as the John Levitow awardee for the Noncommissioned Officer Academy class. At least 270 graduates of NCO Academy and Airman Leadership School completed their studies at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tenn., April 8, 2015, at the Paul H. Lankford Enlisted PME Center, I.G. Brown Training and Education Center. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Jerry Harlan/Released)

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